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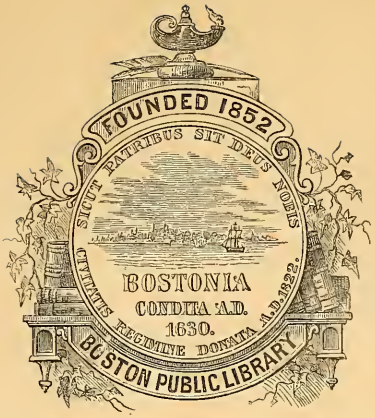

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CHRISTIANITY DESIGNED AND ADAPTED TO BE A UNIVERSAL RELIGION.

A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT THE ORDINATION

OF THE

REV. JAMES W. THOMPSON,

AS PASTOR OF THE

SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY,

IN NATICK,

FEB. 17, 1830.

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DISCOURSE.

John VIII. 12.

I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

Were an intelligent citizen of one of the most refined nations of antiquity permitted to revisit the earth at the present day, and observe the changes which had taken place since his time, there is nothing, I think, that would more forcibly arrest his attention, than the influence which the christian religion has exerted on the character and condition of mankind. For example, were that great and good man, Socrates, at this moment among us, instituting a comparison between the present state of things in the world, and that which subsisted in his own age, I doubt not it would be his spontaneous and hearty confession, that he now witnessed, in no inconsiderable measure, that intellectual and moral advancement of his species, which was formerly the dearest hope of his heart, and the anticipation of which was the greatest solace of his sufferings and the only reward of his labours. He would acknowledge that the human race had gone forward in a path that

might be tracked by its exceeding brightness; that there was much more of wisdom, of virtue, and of enjoyment in the world; that the nations had become more civilized; that the mass of the people were more enlightened and moral; and that a more correct estimate of the nature and sources of happiness had diffused itself through society. He would admit that his own city, the queenly Athens, the seat of arts and arms, with all its wealth, and philosophy, and refinement, might well be termed barbarous, when contrasted with those communities of modern times, that enjoy the comforts of social life, act from the suggestions of good sense and moral principle, and are at all times animated by the desire of improvement.

He would naturally be led to inquire what were the causes of this great progress in society; and I believe, that after a deliberate survey of the several agents that might be supposed to have produced this effect, he would come to the conclusion, that the spirit, the principles, and the institutions of Christianity had had by far the greatest share in the work. He would remember that in ancient times, they had many things which they presumed would conduce to the well-being of man. They had an ingenious religion and a subtile philosophy. They had a literature and arts, which were the glory of their age, and have been the admiration of all succeeding times. They had wise men and great men innumerable. They had dominion, and territory, and

fame. They had every thing but those peculiar blessings which have been conferred upon the world by Christianity and the christian sabbath.

The christian sabbath! That is an institution so novel, so peculiar, so dissonant from all his former experience, that it attracts the particular notice of our Athenian visiter. For six successive days, he sees all around him activity and busy life; in the streets, the moving multitude; in the fields, the joyful occupations of the hubandman; industry in the workshop, enterprise on the public walks, and thrift at home. The morning of the seventh day arrives, and the scene is changed. The din of labour has ceased; the workshop is closed; the fields are vacant; the public places are deserted; the streets are a solitude. He listens, but his ear can catch no sound. He fears that some terrible judgment has fallen upon the devoted city, and that the inmates of its dwellings are lifeless. But soon this mysterious and melancholy silence is broken; a strange sound strikes upon his ear. It is the sound of the sabbath bell. At the signal, he observes the inhabitants issuing from their homes. He goes forth himself, and is borne along by the swarming multitude. He remarks an entire change in the appearance of the population. The very countenances, in which, but the day before, he had read the deep traces of anxiety and toil, are now tranquil and composed. The habiliments of industry, too, are laid aside, and a simple and decent habit distinguishes

the day of rest from the day of labour. The mixed multitude enters what seems to him a place of public resort. He thinks, doubtless, it is the school of some eminent philosopher, who there proposes to teach men wisdom. He has a curiosity to hear the system which he teaches, that he may compare it with those prevalent in his own times; and he accordingly enters.

He finds gathered there persons of all ages, ranks, and conditions, engaged with solemn demeanour in what he supposes to be a religious service. He listens to the address of the officiating priest, and he confesses that he has at last heard what he had long sought, yet sought in vain, among the discordant and bewildering systems of ancient theology. He hears the welcome declaration, that a Saviour 'hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light; that the hour is coming in which all that are in the grave shall hear his voice, and shall come forth.' Christ crucified might, indeed, appear foolishness to his conceited countrymen assembled in the Areopagus. They might mock when Paul preached to them of the resurrection of the dead. But to the enlarged and enlightened mind of Socrates, it would present itself as a most reasonable and acceptable doctrine. To him, who had himself died a martyr in the cause of truth and virtue, a crucified and a risen Saviour would appear 'the power of God and the wisdom of God.'—When reflecting, at the close of the day, on all that he had seen and

heard, he would testify that this stated season of rest and worship was a most useful and blessed institution. He would acknowledge that the sacrifices and ceremonies of his national religion, were but as the shadows of that spiritual worship in which he sees the highest and the humblest in this christian land, unitedly engaged. He would admit that all the gorgeous processions and splendid festivals of which antiquity could boast, were but poor pageants when contrasted with the simple repose and silence of the christian sabbath.

To the thoughtful and discerning mind of the wise man of Athens, there is one characteristic of the christian dispensation, that would present itself with peculiar force; and that is, its design and adaptation to be a *universal* religion. The sublime truth, announced in those words of our Saviour, 'I am the light of the world,' is one of the most striking features of his religion. Unlike all other teachers who had preceded him, his declared purpose was to enlighten the whole world. The lawgivers, who, before his time, had devised codes and established rules of civil polity, had legislated solely for their own nations. The framers of religious systems had formed and adapted them to the character and circumstances of a particular people. The reformers, who at various times had risen up among men, had confined their plans of revolution and improvement to some designated community. And the philosophers im-

parted their instructions within so limited a range, and to so small a body of select disciples, that it seems as if they purposed to conceal them from all but the initiated, and were unwilling that their tenets should be known beyond the precincts of their own schools. In the long lapse of ages, the world had seen a Moses, a Numa, and a Zoroaster, men of singular wisdom and virtue, labouring with untiring perseverance to effect the moral and religious reformation of their countrymen. There had been many and worthy examples of disinterested benevolence, and of a pure and devoted love of country. Politicians, and patriots, and benefactors of nations, had appeared in every age and in every region of the globe.

Jesus Christ appeared upon earth, and at the very outset, by the mere annunciation of his purpose, a purpose at once so sublime and comprehensive, raised himself far above all the reformers, philosophers, and sages that had ever lived. His large and generous soul surveyed and comprehended in its wide grasp, all the capacities, interests, wants and woes of the whole human race. He sent a keen and searching glance over the earth, and he beheld a world lying in wickedness and misery. As a patriot, he wept at the impending desolation of his country. As a philanthropist, he mourned over the moral desolation and wretchedness of man. He would not, therefore, suffer himself to be trammelled and impeded in his career of benevolence and

reform by the mere accidents of time and place. He does not come forth, and, with the narrow views of other reformers, proclaim, 'I am the light of the age—I am the light of my nation—I am the light of Judea and Galilee.' But, at the first annunciation of his design, he rises at once to the original and grand conception of a universal religion; a religion which should comprehend in its wide embrace the numerous and scattered tribes of the great human family; a religion which should be promulgated in every language and in every climate; and accordingly he utters the sublime and solemn declaration of the text, 'I am the light of *the world*,'—of the world in all its diversified regions, and in all successive ages.

This idea of a universal religion, a religion which should supersede the countless systems of polytheism and false religion, that prevailed and flourished on the earth, you will admit, my hearers, was a vast and stupendous one. Putting entirely out of view the question of the truth and divine origin of this religion, it must be admitted, even by the skeptic, that the mere conception of a scheme so novel and grand, is indicative of superiour intellectual light and power, and entitles him who disclosed it, to profound admiration. And need I ask how much his admiration would be increased, when he learns that this original conception was first avowed by an obscure and unlettered individual, in a secluded region, and in the midst of an ignorant and

narrow-minded people. Let him cast a glance upon the map of the ancient world, and he will observe, bordering on the eastern extremity of the great inland sea, a small and narrow strip of land, inhabited by a separate and singular people; a people cut off from all intercourse with the rest of the world by the peculiarities of their civil and religious polity, by a distinctive language and by national prejudice; a people regarded by all other nations with aversion and contempt, on account of their alleged exclusiveness and 'hatred of the human race,' and consequently debarred from all the light that might possibly be derived from the learning and philosophy of their more intelligent neighbours. Now let the unbeliever consider, that it was from the bosom of a people so secluded, so illiterate, and fully persuaded of the perfection of their own religious faith and ritual, that there proceeded a Teacher and Reformer, who had formed views and projected a scheme for the spiritual and moral renovation of our race, which had escaped the researches of all preceding times, and far transcended the wisdom of the world. An uneducated peasant, a despised Galilean, promulgated a plan for the reformation and advancement of mankind, that had never once entered the mind of any of the boasted sages and philosophers of the most liberal, and cultivated age.—Can the infidel maintain, can he believe, that there was nothing extraordinary, nothing unaccountable, nothing supernatural in all this? Which

requires the greatest measure of faith, to believe that a solitary, unaided individual, under the inauspicious circumstances which have just been detailed, arrived, solely by the use of his natural faculties, at the knowledge of most important truths, which had eluded the sagacity of the wisest men in all ages, or to believe that it was by the inspiration of the Almighty that Jesus of Nazareth was enabled to speak as never man spake?

And here I cannot help remarking the seeming unfitness and natural inadequacy of the means and instruments employed in this great scheme of universal reform. Had it been left to human judgment to appoint the circumstances of its origin and diffusion, the author of it, instead of being the reputed son of a carpenter, cradled in a manger and bred in obscurity, would have been born in a regal palace, and nurtured amid delicacy and refinement. The wise men of all lands would have been summoned to become his teachers, and the princely pupil would have imbibed the best lessons of earthly wisdom from the lips of an Aristotle or a Zeno. When he entered upon his great work, he would have chosen men of the same description as his disciples; and his theology would have been cautiously and systematically unfolded to the curiosity of the educated and refined in the groves of the Academy or in the seclusion of the Porch.

Again, had it been left to human discretion, to determine from what class in society the first heralds

of the new doctrine should be taken, and with what qualifications and accomplishments they should be endowed, they would, doubtless, have been selected from the ranks of the educated, the powerful, and the opulent. Instead of being plain and unlettered men, from the lowly occupation of the fisherman, and the hateful calling of the taxgatherer, they would have been men of illustrious origin, of splendid genius, and profound erudition. Taste and talent, power and wealth, would have been concentrated in the persons of those who were to be sent forth alike into civilized and into barbarous lands, on the arduous enterprise of propagating a religion which avowed an utter hostility to all the existing forms of faith and worship, and which could be established only by the overthrow of ancient institutions and the extermination of popular ceremonies and opinions. Had it been left to the wisdom of man to choose the instruments of such a moral revolution, sages and philosophers would have been despatched, under royal patronage, and with all the means and appurtenances that royal magnificence could supply. Fleets and navies would have convoyed them from island to island, and from one continent to another; whilst phalanxes and legions would have attended them, as the pioneers of their mission, and the guardians of their safety.

Divine Providence, however, appointed a different order of events, and selected agents of a very different character. Not many wise men, not many

mighty, not many noble, were called. The truth was hid from the wise and prudent, and was revealed unto babes in knowledge. The treasure was committed to earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be of God, and not of man.

Our admiration of an enterprise conceived of under such unfavourable circumstances, and confided to such feeble instruments, is further increased when we learn that it was carried into successful operation, has been daily gaining strength, spreading itself more and more widely from that time to this, and has been found by experience to be eminently adapted to become a universal religion, by its conformity to the broad and prominent features of human nature, and by its unrivalled and unquestioned efficacy in making men wiser, better, and happier. Eighteen hundred years have now elapsed since the Founder of our faith uttered his heavenly doctrine to a few poor and scattered followers in the retired villages of Galilee, or in the streets of populous Jerusalem; and from that day to this, it has been gradually and imperceptibly diffusing itself through the world, from community to community, and from nation to nation. The small and almost invisible seed that was planted on the banks of Jordan, has sprung up and flourished, and sent out its boughs unto the sea, and its branches unto the river. Cradled among enemies, and almost strangled at its birth, the religion grew up amidst opposition, obloquy, and persecution. It had every thing

to contend with—learning, philosophy, interest, prejudice, priestcraft, and the civil arm. It combated them all, and made head against them all. Without power, without resources, with nothing but truth and right on its side, it encountered, and at last conquered, all opposition. It gradually undermined the Roman priesthood, secretly triumphed over the Roman arms, and in less than three hundred years seated a christian emperor on the throne of the Cæsars. From that period we may date its toleration, if not its establishment in the world. Its subsequent growth has been slow, yet steady. It creeps along from kingdom to kingdom, from island to island, and from continent to continent, until at last the whole earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

In the mean time empires have arisen and fallen, and the face of the world has been repeatedly changed. Christianity witnessed the descent of the barbarian hordes upon the Roman territory, and the consequent desolation and downfal of that mighty empire. She accompanied them back to their northern retreats, and by her mild but irresistible influence, she civilized the barbarian, and extirpated the impure and bloody rites of his brutal superstition. She banished from among the rude conquerors and the polished nations which they overrun, the anxious and distracting service of polytheism. Dethroning the hosts of false gods, she restored the sceptre of the universe to One Supreme and Infinite Being. She

abolished sacrifices, auguries, and whatever else there was puerile and absurd in their pompous superstitions; and thus removed every obstacle which the policy of the priests interposed between man and the Deity. She suppressed the sanguinary combats of the gladiatorial shows, and the more horrid practice of human sacrifices; overthrew the profane altars; imposed a perpetual silence on the lying oracles; prostrated in the dust their senseless idols; flung from their pedestals the statues of their deified heroes; and transformed their splendid temples, from asylums of crime, and lurking-places of impurity, into houses of spiritual worship and devout supplication.

Does any one doubt whether Christianity is suited and worthy to become a universal religion? I ask him to look at what she has done for the moral character and the social condition of our race in those countries where she has obtained a footing and an influence. By enforcing the relative duties, she has established the equality of the sexes, and effected an entire change in the constitution of society. By abolishing polygamy, and restraining the licentiousness of divorce, she has raised woman from the degraded station of a slave or a menial, to the rank of a companion and friend of man. She has put an end to the unnatural exposure of children, caused them to be cherished and instructed, and made home the seat of all joy and happiness. She has created something of which paganism had no

experience or conception—the pleasures of religious sympathy and the delights of domestic life.

Compare, now, the condition of slaves in Christendom, with the servitude of ancient paganism, or of the unbelieving world at the present day. To the latter there was no sabbath, no stated time of rest, but one monotonous, unbroken round of toil and sorrow. No one can deny that the spirit and institutions of Christianity have greatly improved the condition of this unfortunate class of our brethren. She gradually extirpated the slavery of the ancient world, and as her spirit is the spirit of freedom, equality and justice, I believe that she will one day wipe out the foul blot of African slavery.

Look, too, my hearers, at what Christianity has done for the relief of human misery. She has erected your hospitals, your alms-houses, your asylums and your infirmaries. All these are christian institutions, dictated by christian precepts, and springing from the christian spirit. You might survey all the territory of enlightened Greece, or traverse the vast domains of the Roman Empire, and not find a single edifice raised and devoted to the relief of suffering and want. You could not find a single charitable or humane establishment, instituted and endowed by those polite and learned heathen. These, I repeat it, are christian inventions, resulting from the benign and compassionate spirit of the gospel. In ancient times, as you may learn from the New Testament alone, the poor, the sick, the infirm, and the aged,

were but little attended to or regarded. Go through their streets, and you may see the wretched victims of disease lying by the way-side, and meeting you at every turn. And that malady, most melancholy and appalling, which assails and prostrates the noble intellect, had no retreat. You see the poor maniac, whom a false philosophy and a defective science stigmatized as possessed by a demoniacal influence, manacled, yet wandering at large, exposed to injury and insult.—What a blessed change, my friends, has the benevolent religion of Jesus produced in the feelings, the sentiments, and the practices of men!

It is the peculiar glory of Christianity, that she inculcates a free, generous, universal benevolence. All other religions have been partial and exclusive, confining the good-will and charity of their disciples to the votaries of the same faith or the inhabitants of the same region. The Jew limited his benevolence to the children of Abraham; the Mahometan hates the 'christian dog;' and even the refined citizens of the ancient republics, regarded all foreigners as barbarians and enemies. Christianity, on the other hand, teaches that all men are brethren, creatures of the same Almighty Being, children of the same Merciful Father; and that, therefore, they have a mutual claim upon each other's sympathy and aid. She requires you to love your neighbour as yourself; and she tells you that your neighbour is not merely the individual who lives at the next door, or in the same street, in the same town, or even in the

same country. The good neighbourhood of the gospel is not confined by any artificial and narrow bounds of contiguity or vicinage. It is not circumscribed by geographical lines, nor limited by national feeling, nor cramped by the partialities of intimacy or kindred. It is not friendship; it is not patriotism. It is a more comprehensive and generous principle than either of these; it is philanthropy. Christian charity traverses highland and valley, river and ocean. Wherever it finds a human being, it finds a neighbour and a brother; and wherever it finds want or suffering, it stretches out a liberal and compassionate hand to relieve and succour it.

Christianity has become so interwoven with the whole texture of modern society; she has so insinuated herself into our laws and institutions, our manners and habits, that it is absolutely impossible for any one to say that he is not subject to her control, that he is not affected by her precepts or sanctions. In every place where her truths are statedly dispensed, there is a christian atmosphere, enveloping all, which every individual is obliged to breathe, whether he will or no. The indirect influence of our religion, exerted in this way, is incalculable. You cannot tell, my hearers, how much your daily enjoyment and your nightly security depend upon the invisible agency of christian principle. You know not how much the quiet possession of your property, and the safety of your lives, are insured by the religious sentiment and sympathy, which, imbibed in

the sanctuary, are diffused throughout all the ranks of society.

It is chiefly to the quickening and controlling spirit of the gospel, that you must also refer the great and manifest improvements which, within a few hundred years, have sprung up and spread themselves over the earth. Christianity is but the collective name of all the civilization, freedom, knowledge, virtue and happiness which characterize christian lands. The limits of Christendom are marked by no faint or uncertain lines. Even with all the gross and shocking corruptions that human ignorance and policy have gathered around it, no one can mistake the features, or fail to remark the influence, of our holy faith. No one, for instance, will dispute the superiority, both in point of character and condition, even of the superstitious and bigoted Catholic of Spain over the brutal Mussulman of Turkey.—But such a comparison as this does not do justice to the power of our religion. Compare rather christian England, at the present day, with all her intelligence, skill and benevolence, with the same land when under the sway of druidical superstition, and determine for yourselves what Christianity has done for that country. Compare christian New-England, with her valuable institutions, her sound principles, and her steady habits, with the morals and manners prevalent in that savage wilderness which our fathers subdued, and then judge what is the natural, genuine influence of the gospel.

It is to the religious institutions established by the first settlers of New-England, that we are indebted, not merely for whatever there is of piety and good morals among us, but likewise, in no small degree, for the possession of our civil immunities and our national liberty. The pious and educated Pilgrims had hardly set foot on this bleak and desolate coast, when they planted the church and the school-house side by side, and as they grew in numbers, multiplied them in every village. And what was the consequence? Virtue and knowledge sprung up together. A spirit of religion, of inquiry, and of freedom, went up by our mountains, and down by our vallies; and to their efficacy, under God, are we indebted for our accumulated privileges and blessings. Yes. The influence of christian principles and christian institutions on the prosperity, virtue, and happiness of New-England, has been greater than that of all the laws that fill the statute-book.—But the whole amount of these advantages and benefits can be discerned only by contrast. They cannot be duly appreciated by those who have always enjoyed them. They will be fully felt only when they are withdrawn. God, of his infinite mercy, avert from us that disastrous day, when our churches shall be closed, and our sabbaths profaned! Abolish the sabbath, and you abolish Christianity. Abolish Christianity, and ignorance and barbarism will creep over the land like a leprosy. Iniquity and misery will bring up the train, and New-Eng-

land will become what Turkey is. Blessed be God, that we yet live in a land of sabbaths and of churches!

Such are some of the external, public, visible effects of Christianity. But would you see her best, her loveliest fruits, you must enter the retirements of private life. You must sit down with a christian family at their fireside, and observe the power of the gospel in healing the wounds of affliction, and assuaging the pangs of bereavement. You must behold her despatching her willing votaries, like angels of mercy, to wait at the bedside of the poor, the sick and the dying; providing for the widow; gathering the orphans into an innocent and peaceful asylum; clothing the naked; feeding the hungry; and ministering timely and substantial relief to all the children of want and wo. When you have observed all this, and have moreover discovered by your own investigation, that not a tenth part of its blessed effects has been told you; when you observe how fitted it is to sooth the sorrows and relieve the infirmities of our common nature, will you not grant that it is adapted and worthy to become the faith of the whole world?

Christianity is likewise adapted to become a universal religion, because it appeals immediately to the noblest part of our nature, and addresses man in his high capacity of an intelligent and rational being. Other religions have appealed to the lower

and weaker principles of his nature ; to his senses; to his love of the marvellous ; to his fondness for show and parade ; and hence secret rites and mysteries, imposing ceremonies and gorgeous spectacles, have, in all ages and countries, constituted their principal and most attractive elements. But Christianity, being purely an intellectual and moral system, addresses itself to the understanding and the heart. It presents to man views of God, of duty, and of futurity, most sublime and comprehensive, and calls upon him to employ on them his highest faculties. It does not command him to prostrate his reason before an unintelligible and mystical creed, but submits all its pretensions and doctrines to scrutiny and proof. Its spirit is the spirit of liberal inquiry and free discussion. The consequence has been, that in every age it has exercised and enlarged and strengthened the human mind, and that the Christians of every period, from the introduction of the gospel to the present time, have been the foremost and the most successful in cultivating the intellect, and enlarging the dominion of knowledge. The Fathers of the church were many of them men of learning, and of deep and vigorous thought. Witness their Apologies in behalf of their adopted faith. When, too, an intellectual darkness shadowed the earth for ages, the little light that glimmered through the gloom, shone through the lattice of the cloister. The monastic institution was the great depository and guardian of the treas-

ures of literature as well as of revelation. It shielded from barbarian violence, and saved from natural decay, the classic as well as the evangelic records. By the patient hand of the christian monk were these precious documents transcribed and perpetuated. And let it be remembered, that the revival of letters was coeval with, and derived no small degree of its impetus and energy, from the spirit of religious reformation, which was then beginning to work mightily.

With the increase of knowledge and the advance of the human mind Christianity has always kept pace. The torch of science, however brilliant, has never dimmed the blaze of gospel light. The discoveries of philosophy have not falsified nor superseded the truths of Christianity. For the greater the light of intellect and reason, the more does Christianity reveal itself. The religion of Jesus is, indeed, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. But the more the soul of man is enlightened and elevated, the more clearly does it discern the excellency of its truths, and the more readily does it comprehend their nature and import. The time has never yet been when the gospel has been found to fall below the level of human science, or to lag behind in the general progress of intellectual culture. On the contrary, it has always kept high above this level, and always led the van. It thus proves itself to have been designed and adapted to become universal in its operation; since its spirit is

the spirit of advance and improvement, and since it dilates and unfolds itself perpetually to the constantly enlarging comprehension of the cultivated understanding.

As an illustration of my meaning, I will refer you to a single fact. The doctrine of the unity of God is one so obvious and simple, that it seems to suggest and recommend itself to the unaided reason of man. And yet, by some strange delusion or perversion of the human mind, no truth has been so much abused and corrupted. The Jews, to whom it was first expressly revealed, were always prone to polytheism, and often invaded the sovereignty of Jehovah by associating with him the gods of the heathen. The grand truth was again announced, with great distinctness and energy, by Jesus Christ, in the revelation of which he was the minister. And yet scarcely was his religion established, when this clear and simple doctrine was so modified, and so obscured by the mists of a vain earthly philosophy, that the unlearned convert to Christianity could hardly tell whether he ought to believe in One God or in Three. In those times, as Jortin shrewdly observes, 'it must needs have been a very learned, and a very subtile, and a very ingenious thing, to be a good christian.' This confusion and perplexity on the fundamental point of all religion, has prevailed and subsisted among the great body of Christians, even to the present day. Amid this general corruption, however, God has not left him-

self without witness. From time to time he has raised up confessors and martyrs to the glorious truth. Witness the honored names of Priestley, Emlyn and Servetus. With the light of knowledge and the advance of mind, we behold this truth, which had been trampled down and despised, discerned and embraced by the sagacious and large intellects of a Newton, a Locke, and a Milton. We come down to our own times, and we find it daily gaining ground and gathering strength, numbering among its disciples the intelligent, the thoughtful, and the serious. For it is a truth which commends itself, with its associated principles, to the understanding and good sense of mankind; and the time, it may be, is not far distant, (such is the rapid spread of light,) that the christian church will come to wonder that the self-contradictory doctrine of a *divided and complex unity* in the divine nature, should ever have been numbered among its essential tenets. All this has been or will be effected by the progressive and expansive character of our religion, which so admirably adapts it to become a universal religion.

The devout Christian will behold with gratitude and joy the prospect of the increased prevalence of the pure and undefiled gospel; and his hope of its complete success and universal establishment will be confirmed, when he looks back upon its past triumphs and permanent effects. 'In the history of Christianity,' says an eloquent French writer,*

* M. l'Abbé de la Mennais, Essai sur l'indifférence en matière de religion.

'nations commence and end. They pass, with their customs, their laws, their opinions, their sciences. One religion alone remains, always believed, notwithstanding the interest which the passions have, not to believe it; always immovable in the midst of this rapid and perpetual movement; always attacked, and always justified; always sheltered from the changes which centuries bring upon the most solid institutions, the most accredited systems; always the more astonishing and the more admired in proportion as it is the more examined; the consolation of the poor, and the sweetest hope of the rich; the shield of the people, and the restraint of the magistrate; the rule of the power which it moderates, and of the obedience which it sanctifies; the great charter of humanity, in which eternal justice, not willing that even crime should be without hope and without protection, stipulates for mercy in favour of repentance; a religion as humble as it is profound, as simple as it is high and magnificent; a religion which subjugates the most powerful genius by its sublimity, and proportions itself, by the clearness of its light, to the most feeble intellect; in fine, an indestructible religion, which resists every thing, triumphs over every thing; over violence and contempt, over sophisms and scaffolds; and, powerful in its antiquity, its victorious evidences, and its benefits, seems to reign over the human mind by right of birth, of conquest, and of love.'

It is because the religion of Jesus is a universal

religion; it is because he proclaimed, 'I am the light of the world,' and commissioned his apostles to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, that we, my hearers, at this time, are in the full possession of its light and benefits. Had our Saviour narrowed his conception of the gospel, and confined it to his own nation or his own age, we might now have been involved in primitive barbarism and ignorance. Without the bright light of Christianity, our minds would have been shrouded in the darkness of heathen superstition. But for the assurance which the gospel affords, of the existence of an Almighty and Merciful Father, we of this free and happy land, might have been as abject and degraded as the savage tribes which our fathers displaced, or as the barbarian islanders from whom they traced their descent. We might, on this very spot, long since consecrated to the worship of the One Living and True God, now be doing homage to some one of the many objects of Indian idolatry, or bowing ourselves down, in a senseless and slavish worship, to the uncouth images which our own hands had carved and fashioned. Were it not for the influence of the precepts and sanctions of this religion, our country would be a moral waste, and few, if any of us, would have the power to withstand the solicitations of sense, and subdue the risings of passion. Without its promises we should be hopeless; without its consolations cheerless.—With such views and feelings concerning our religion, and

looking forward with the eye of faith, and with a confidence built on the sure promise of God, to its wider diffusion, to its universal prevalence, who is there of us, my hearers, that does not rejoice that this day a new labourer is to be introduced into the vast field, who may do something to hasten this glorious consummation?

We stand, my hearers, on holy ground—on the spot consecrated by the labours and the prayers of the first Protestant minister who preached the glad tidings of salvation to the savage tribes of this western wilderness. Yes, it was here that the venerable Eliot, by his disinterestedness and zeal in this humble but arduous vocation, merited and acquired the honourable title of the *Apostle to the Indians.* The very spot on which we stand witnessed his toils, and was watered by his tears. It was here that he preached; it was here that he often reposed after his fatiguing and perilous wanderings; the same roof covering the sanctuary of God and the lowly couch of this holy man. It was on this ground that the first Indian church in America was gathered. Carry your thoughts back through a space of an hundred and seventy years, and in imagination you may behold the sons of the forest assembled here around the venerable Evangelist, and may hear the simple prayer of the untutored Indian offered up to the Great Spirit in the name of Jesus.

The teacher and his converts have all passed away. The race of the red men has dwindled and at last

disappeared. The forests through which they once pursued their sports and hunted their game, have bowed before the axe of the settler, and are succeeded by cultivated fields and pleasant farms. Yet though no living fruits of his labours remain, the name and the character of ELIOT shall long be held sacred among us. It shall be perpetuated, we trust, by a regular ministry, which, after a long interval, is this day restored to this hallowed spot. It shall be perpetuated by this beautiful edifice that occupies the ancient site of his rude temple. Peace be within these walls! For my brethren and companions' sake I will now say, Peace be with you, and with the Pastor whom you have chosen!

THE CHARGE.

BY THE REV. JAMES THOMPSON.

MY DEAR SON,

The solemn transactions of this occasion consummate the early desires of your heart, and fill mine with emotions too tender, too strong, and almost too overwhelming, for utterance. An important object of our mutual exertions, sacrifices and prayers, is this day attained. By the suffrages of this christian society, and your unrestrained consent, sanctioned by this Ecclesiastical Council, in those rites which apostolic usage justifies, and the order of our Congregational churches seems to require, you have been ordained a minister of Jesus Christ, and consecrated to the service of God in the gospel of his Son. By this act we pretend not to have communicated any new grace, or to have imparted any supernatural power; nor yet do we assure you, that you hold your ordination by an uninterrupted succession from the apostles. We do not claim the right either to prescribe the opinions you shall embrace, or to dictate what doctrines you shall preach. But, in imitation of apostolic example, and the immemorial usage of

our churches, this Council, acknowledging you as a fellow-labourer, would exhort and charge you, to approve yourself a good minister of Jesus Christ. They have constituted me their organ in this service. 'Now the purpose of this Charge is love, out of a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned.' Receive it as from them, and let the channel through which it flows admonish you, that it comes with a deep, paternal and affectionate solicitude for your good, and consequently demands a filial, docile and reverent attention.

The letters of Paul to Timothy and Titus, written expressly for the purpose of teaching them and others the duties of the pastoral office, contain a compendium of duty. These you will frequently read, with serious attention and careful self-application. And in the language of the apostle I say to you 'This very charge by the authority which belongeth to me as a teacher, I entrust unto thee, my son, that thou mayest fight under it the good warfare, keeping to faith and a good conscience.'

By your desire of the office of an overseer in the church, with which you have this day been invested, you have 'desired an honourable employment.' In this office then you must be 'blameless, sober, respectable, a lover of hospitality, ready to teach, not greedy of dishonourable gains, but gentle, peaceable, no novice, lest you be puffed up, and so fall into blame from the accuser.' Let the desire to be a good minister of Jesus Christ be paramount to all

others. 'Nourish yourself up in the doctrines of the faith and those good instructions with which you are acquainted. 'Take care that no one despise thy youth, but make yourself a pattern to the believers in conversation, in behaviour, in love, in faith, in purity. Exercise yourself in these things. Be wholly in them; that your improvement in all things may be manifest. Attend to yourself and persevere in your doctrine.'—Take heed to yourself. Be jealous of your own heart, and often inquire what influence the truths which you preach to others have upon yourself. A deceitful heart has many treacherous arts by which it may impose upon us. And though the office and employment of a minister keep him out of the way of many temptations, to which other men are exposed, yet he is liable to many others of a different kind, which are no less dangerous. See that your heart be imbued with a deep, noiseless, practical piety. You will watch over yourself assiduously, that your mind may be always in a suitable frame for exercising the duties of your function. Let your intercourse with men, like that of your Heavenly Master, be open and free, yet pure and instructive. Convince the most cheerful circles that whilst the christian minister can enjoy the decent and innocent pleasures of this life, his chief satisfaction springs from a higher and purer source.

Whilst I exhort and charge you to be grave and sincere, I admonish you to avoid the sour and monkish grimace, so much affected by many at the pres-

ent day. To these gloom appears synonymous with gravity; and a sanctimonious aspect has, by some sects, been deemed an essential characteristic of the clergyman. The fountain of the natural affections is sealed, and all the tender, smiling emotions are frozen into the coldness of indifference. A fixed and stately morosity of countenance becomes the index to feelings abstracted from the interests of men, and which are alike unsocial and unnatural. It is a narrow and jealous spirit, that stands back from the communities of the living, a frowning spectator of social and rational intercourse, which it construes into impiety. With distorted aspect it takes its stand in the circles of youth, and groans out its anathemas against the offspring of God. Let this cold and misanthropic spirit rest forever in the cloisters which it has reared, and let a kindlier temper mark the minister of Jesus.

Gravity does not consist in the conversion of the human heart into stone, nor in a wo-worn countenance, nor in a voluntary seclusion from the abodes of men. No. It is a decent reserve, which unbends in the circles of friendship, and allows the feelings to mingle in the current of social and intellectual joy. It neither smiles on the sallies of malice and iniquity, nor frowns on the gaieties of innocence and youth. The example of our Saviour and his apostles is a full illustration of the nature of christian gravity. They were grave, but not austere;

devout, but not morose. They mingled in the societies of men with the feelings of men.

Guided by the apostle, to gravity I charge you to add sincerity. You will remember, however, that by a frivolous levity, the most unsullied integrity may fail of convincing others that you possess this christian virtue. You may, therefore, be in danger of overacting in this particular, and the apprehension of being thought deficient in sincerity, may lead you, with the purest intentions, not only to an affectation of seriousness, but to the practice of obtruding religious conversation into all places and upon all occasions. Through a desire of precluding distrust of your sincerity, you are cautioned not to pursue a course likely to establish a character for detestable hypocrisy. Christian sincerity requires no fictitious aids. On the contrary, it leaves you to what God and nature made you—man, with all his feelings and affections, interests and sensibilities, smiles and tears. If you feel, as you ought, 'the love of Christ constraining you,' your course will be alike distant from the giddy and trifling manner which betrays a thoughtlessness of the subject of religion, and that fastidious solicitude which frequently excites and always merits contempt by its officious and affected zeal.

You will not give up your right to freedom of action in compliance with every prejudice and humour. 'Yet is there a case in which it is doubtful

where the right ends and the bad begins, you will make every judicious person sensible that you are within the disputed limit.' Sooner than be thought to offend against temperance, be abstemious; against candour, suppress even innocent remarks upon character; against decent gravity, avoid freedoms in themselves harmless.

You are not only to take heed to yourself, but to your doctrine. This you are to draw from the pure, uncorrupt word of God. The Bible, and that alone, as a Protestant, you are charged to make the guide of your faith and practice, to the exclusion of all human creeds and formularies. I charge you never to incur the guilt of teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. Bring every system of faith to the law and the testimony, and receive or reject it as it agrees or disagrees with the inspired oracles.

You will make it a primary object to gain a correct understanding of the christian doctrine, in all its parts, and in their several connexions. As an interpreter of the christian scriptures, you will carefully attend to the scope of the passage, to the particular object of the inspired writer, the occasion of his writing, and the circumstances of the persons addressed. Doing this, with a mind unbiassed by the spirit of party and open to conviction, you will discover and exhibit the truth in all its beautiful simplicity and admirable harmony. In interpreting the scriptures, you will adopt as a rule, 'that what

is difficult and obscure is to be explained by what is clear and intelligible.' Expounding a text which appears difficult, by the application of a rule or principle no better understood than the doubtful text, or by a gratuitous supposition, that has no foundation or support, has formed the basis of systems the most false and absurd. To build important doctrines upon insulated and detached passages, and force the sacred writers to speak a language foreign to their minds, and wrest the scriptures to accommodate preconceived systems, is to handle the word of God deceitfully; against any approaches to which dreadful perversion I would most earnestly warn you.

As an ambassador of Christ, you are not only to beseech men, in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God, but to point out the necessity and means of becoming reconciled. The necessity of reconciliation will be found in the alienation of the heart from the life of God; in the prostration of reason to the dominion of passion, and of the noblest faculties of the soul to the service of sin; and in the opposition of the will to the righteous authority of Heaven.

The means of effecting this reconciliation are contained in that book which you are to announce as a faithful transcript of the purposes of Deity. You are to consider that book true in a sense in which no other book is true. It is among books as the Saviour was among men. You are charged to preach the contents of that book which the Lion of

the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has honoured by unsealing. On its unfolded pages are delineated subjects the most momentous, sublime and magnificent. In this holy book faith, repentance, and holiness are prescribed as the only effectual means of salvation; and man, as a conscious, intelligent agent, is invited to become a coworker with God in promoting his benevolent design. Grasping your subject in all its vast extent, and wrought up by a sense of its infinite importance, to the highest pitch of mental and devotional fervour, you will come forth to your people to impart not the gospel of God only, but your own soul also.

> ——'Then nature speaks out
> Her genuine language—and the words of men,
> Big with the very motion of their souls,
> Declare with what accumulated force
> The impetuous nerve of feeling urges on
> The native weight and energy of things.'

In the choice of your subjects for the pulpit, study to be useful. Do not entertain your hearers with mere declamation and jejune harangues; but bring forth beaten oil for the lamps of the sanctuary.

In your public services avoid the extremes of too great tediousness of length, which might savour of the pharisaic presumption of being heard for much speaking; and too much brevity, which might lead to the false supposition that an attendance on the mere forms of religion was sufficient.

You will administer the ordinances of religion to

proper subjects. In the admission of members to communion, remember that your discretionary power is limited, and that the extent of your negative to those that request it, if of good character, is questionable.

In visiting the sick, a tender and affectionate manner is recommended. In every case, I believe, even of stupidity and hardness of heart, an exhibition of the love of God, in the provisions and hopes of the gospel, described in feeling language, will sooner draw, than the terrors of the Lord drive, the sick and dying one to God and duty.

'Thou therefore, my son, strengthen thyself in the gracious gospel of Christ Jesus, and what thou hast heard from me through many witnesses, commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. Do thou endure hardship, like a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Be faithful unto death, and Christ will give you the crown of life.'

The ground on which you stand, in mute but impressive eloquence, charges you, 'be faithful.' It bids you remember the ardent love, the unparalleled patience, and the unquenchable zeal which have honoured and hallowed it. It bids you call to mind the fervent prayers, the solemn praises, and the devout thanksgivings, which long ago went up from hence to God. It bids you cherish the memory of him who here first offered the gospel of peace, and opened the gates of the kingdom of heaven, to the rude children of the forest; of him

whose sincerity and piety and philanthropy made even the untamed savage to feel and to exclaim, 'How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace.' For, my son, you are called, under Providence, to minister in holy things, on the very spot where the sainted ELIOT knelt and prayed; where he united his untutored followers in the grateful worship of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let his example guide, instruct and encourage you. No difficulties were too great for his perseverance to surmount. His attachment to the religion of his Master, and his desire for the wider diffusion of its influences, no obstacles could effectually oppose, no sacrifices in any degree abate. Be it so with you.

And now, my dear son, with a heart impressed with the deepest paternal solicitude, and with devout and fervent prayer, I commend you to God. May he bless you with a long, happy and successful ministry; and under your only Master, the great Head of the church, may you be wise to win souls. In his dear and ever honoured name I bid you God speed.

RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP.

BY THE REV. LUTHER HAMILTON.

To give you, my brother, the right hand on any occasion belonging to the intercourse of friendship, would be to me a pleasing service. To meet you here, and, as a minister of the gospel, to offer you the greetings of fraternal sympathy, affords me a higher pleasure than any common incident of social life could impart. For I know that to you, to this christian society, and to all whose prayers ascend to God for your future usefulness and happiness, this occasion is fraught with a peculiar, a sacred interest. The promises, the hopes, the anticipations which belong to it, reach far forward. They relate to all the chequered scenes of life that are before you; to all the lights and shadows of your mortal pilgrimage; and to that higher state of existence, which is the object of the holiest aspirations of the human soul. The ancient usage of giving the right hand on an occasion like this, cannot, therefore, seem to you an idle form or an inappropriate observance. For how

few events could more materially affect your social relations and duties, than the connexion which the services of this day are intended to solemnize. And, in what so deeply interests you, it cannot be deemed unsuited either to the social or religious sentiments of your senior brethren in the ministry, that they should adopt this significant mode of expressing their sympathy.

Under their direction, therefore, I give you, my brother, this right hand as a token of the sentiments of fellowship with which they welcome you to the field of your labours; of the sincere fraternal regard which both your character and the new relation in which you stand to them are suited to awaken; and of the pleasure with which they congratulate you on the bright prospects of usefulness which lie before you. I give it also as a pledge of cooperation, of aid, and of encouragement in all those cares, labors, and trials incident to the christian ministry, in which it may be possible and desirable that a brother's heart and hand should participate. Finally, I give it as an acknowledgment of your equality in official rights and authority with any other duly appointed minister of the New Testament, any other teacher of the religion of Christ.—By your acceptance of the hand thus offered with fraternal greetings, you promise a reciprocity of sentiment and conduct towards your fellow-laborers and brethren. Let not the hand which you have extended to me ever be withheld from the worthy. May Almighty God

bless you, my brother, and make your ministry useful and happy, and your preparation for the employments and pleasures of immortality complete.

BRETHREN OF THIS RELIGIOUS SOCIETY,

Your christian brethren in various places, by their pastors and delegates, extend to you the right hand of fellowship. They offer their cordial congratulations on the hopes inspired by the promises of this day. They rejoice with you in the gift which you have received from the Head of the church, and in the brotherly love which has distinguished all your doings in relation to the settlement of a minister. Thus may your piety and charity ever evince that you are not only faithful hearers, but also doers of the word. Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good. Live in love, and the God of love and peace will be with you and bless you.

ADDRESS TO THE SOCIETY,

BY THE REV. CHARLES BRIGGS.

Seldom do we witness an occasion so important as the ordination of a christian minister. The connexion which is then formed, is one of peculiar interest and solemn obligation. It is of a sacred nature; and the well-being and happiness of a community are in no small degree involved in it. The design of the pastoral office is, to dispense the truths, and disseminate the good influences, of the gospel. It aims to affect the heart and the life; to elevate human character and improve human condition; to raise men above all that is low, earthly and sensual, to the dignity of intellectual and moral beings, to the sublime enjoyments and glorious hopes of the sons of God. By showing the connexion there is between character and condition, and holding up to view the strongest possible motives to virtue and holiness, its purpose is to brighten the divine image in the soul, and 'make wise unto salvation.' Who, then, with a due sense of the value

of our holy religion, and of the influence of the christian ministry in promoting its great objects, can with feelings of indifference be present at an occasion like this? Whose sympathies are not called forth towards those, who are more immediately interested in the events of this day? Who, in this house, does not spontaneously offer up a silent prayer to Heaven, that these transactions may be accompanied with the divine blessing, and lead to the happiest results; may be the means of promoting the cause of truth and righteousness, and of advancing the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom?

The obligations of a minister and people are reciprocal. Every duty which is required of him, implies a corresponding duty on their part. Suffer me then, my christian friends, the members of this religious society, to call your attention to some of the duties that result from the relation in which you stand to your pastor.

The success of his ministerial labors will, in a great measure, depend on your cooperation. If you would act the part of faithful parishioners, would strengthen his hands, and encourage his heart, and give efficacy to his exertions, you must regularly attend upon his public instructions. Regarding you all as his friends; wishing from his soul, and laboring diligently, to advance your best interests; perhaps growing pale over the midnight lamp, and passing sleepless nights to prepare for you instructive and edifying discourses, he will expect to meet you

here on every returning sabbath. Now if you frequently, and, as he believes, needlessly, absent yourselves from public worship, it will wound his feelings, and throw discouragements in his way. He will infer that either his performances are not worthy of you, or that you are not worthy of them; and that would give him pain. Or, what will still more afflict him, he will fear that you have fallen into a moral insensibility, and are indifferent to the subject of religion. Even if such instances of neglect are but few, he cannot view them with indifference. No;—it will damp his ardour, paralyse his efforts, and lessen his usefulness among you.

Whereas, if you duly appreciate the blessings of public worship, (and I doubt not that you will,) and, instead of leaving your empty seats to testify to your religious indifference, shall habitually frequent this sacred place, your presence will animate his exertions, cheer his heart, add fervour to his devotions, and render his labors comparatively light and pleasant. If he perceives that you place a high value on the institutions of religion, and believes that you are making advances in the christian life, it will be to him a rich source of consolation amidst the trials of his profession. It will be his best reward; for he will then indulge the animating hope, that he has not spent his strength for nought, and that his labor has not been in vain in the Lord.

Remember that while it is his duty to preach, it is your duty to hear, and wisely and faithfully to

use the means of religious improvement, which God has graciously provided for you. Come to this consecrated place from principle, from a sense of duty, from the benevolent purpose of being blessings to those around you by the influence of your example, and from a sincere desire to advance yourselves in christian perfection. Yes;—besides your obligations to your clergyman, let these motives excite you to a constant attendance upon his ministrations. Let no trivial considerations, I entreat you, detain you at home on the sabbath, and deprive you of the inestimable blessings of religious instruction. Let nothing, whether it be the heat of summer, or the cold and snows of winter, whether it be slight indisposition, or domestic engagements, whether pride in dress, or indolence and sloth, let nothing, I say, which would not prevent you from going abroad on secular pursuits, for gain or pleasure, or to provide for the dispensable wants of the perishable part of your nature, prevent you from going to the house of God, to attend to the wants of your immortal souls.

Besides a due regard to the apostolic injunction, of 'not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together,' it will be your duty to 'take heed how you hear;' to resort here, not simply in obedience to custom, or to subserve some worldly purpose; not to pass an idle hour, or to gratify a vain curiosity; but to hear the truths and imbibe the spirit of the religion you profess; with an earnest desire to know and to do the will of your Father in heaven; to

cherish a sense of your dependence; to pour forth your gratitude to the Giver of all good; and to gather strength for the duties, the trials, and the temptations of life.

The instructions of the sanctuary will profit you but little, unless you attend to them with seriousness and candor, and with a deep and solemn sense of their importance. If, whilst your bodies are here, your minds are far away upon the things of earth and time, upon your farms or your merchandize; or, if you attend here with a spirit of cavilling, or of cold and heartless criticism, those unholy fires which are not unfrequently lighted around the altars of our religion; if, I say, you thus attend, the great objects of christian worship will be utterly defeated, and the voice that calls you to repentance and a holy life, may call to you in vain.

Even in the time of our Saviour and his apostles, the success of the gospel, though dispensed with an eloquence and power, since unknown, depended almost entirely upon the disposition of those to whom it was proclaimed. The instructive parable of the sower assures us of this, and teaches us that it is in the spiritual as in the natural world, that however good may be the seed, and however skilful the hand that sows it, if the ground is not prepared for its reception, it might as well be sown by the way-side, or scattered among the rocks.

Every minister of the gospel should have the privilege of expressing freely and without reserve

his peculiar views of religion. In order to be useful and happy, he must feel an entire freedom on this subject. I do not say that subjects of controversy should be the burden of his preaching, or that they should often be brought before his hearers. But I do say, that he should feel under no restraint in discussing any of the doctrines of revelation. And I furthermore say, that common honesty requires of him an open avowal of his religious opinions. How unhappy must be the condition of that minister, who having never taught his people what to believe, finds them divided in their sentiments; and in his preaching satisfies neither them nor his own conscience. Feeling, perhaps, the importance of those doctrines upon which he is silent; desirous that what he considers the truth should prevail, and yet fearing to raise his voice in her cause; keeping back some of his opinions, lest he should give offence to a part of his hearers, and at the same time giving offence to others by this very concealment; he is in a situation very unfavorable to the growth of mind or to growth in grace. I am at a loss to know how a minister of the gospel, with the common sensibilities of our nature, with that deep religious principle and sincerity of heart, which characterize every faithful servant of Christ, I say I am utterly at a loss to know how he can continue in such a situation, and live in such miserable bondage. To me almost any situation would be preferable. Remove me from the society of my fellow beings, and with the testimony of

a good conscience, I might not be very unhappy. Nay, immure me in the deepest cell of a prison; shut out from me the common objects of life, the common air and the common light of heaven, and put a chain on every limb; still, my mind would be free, and my heart unshackled, and I might enjoy that liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. But place me in a situation like the one just described, where I should offend my people, offend my conscience, and offend my God, and, with the free use of my limbs, and in the exercise of all the rights and privileges of a free citizen in a free land, I should still be in servitude, in a state of mental and moral bondage. Into such a bondage God grant that your clergyman may never, by your conduct, be under the slightest temptation of falling. I hope and trust, for your sake as well as his, that you will never be disposed to lay him under any painful restraints in the disclosure of his religious sentiments.

He enters upon the labors of the ministry here with the assurance that you are his friends; and he will expect a cordial reception and a kind welcome in every family and by every individual. He comes to you with every requisite qualification for the duties of his calling, and, as we believe, with the purest and the best of motives. He is to devote to you his time and talents, to spend the freshness of his youth and the best of his strength in the cause of virtue, of truth and of righteousness among you. I am persuaded that he already feels a deep

interest in your welfare, and will cultivate towards you the kindest feelings of his nature; that it is the great purpose of his soul to do you good; that his heart's desire and prayer to God is, that he may 'come to you in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ,' and be the means of promoting your present and your everlasting welfare. Is it not then, my christian friends, incumbent on you to reciprocate his kindness and consult his welfare; to treat him in all respects as a friend; and, in the language of the apostle, to 'see that he be with you without fear,' and to 'esteem him very highly in love for his work's sake?'

It will be the part of wisdom, as well as of duty, to do all in your power to make his situation comfortable and pleasant; for he will by that means be the more useful to you. If there be a single impediment to his usefulness, a single care or anxiety that weighs upon his spirits, and you have it in your power to alleviate or remove it, and yet leave him to struggle on unaided and alone, believe me, you will be by far the greatest sufferers; for you will suffer in a spiritual point of view. And that you may at all times the better know his peculiar situation, his wants, cares, and trials, cultivate habits of familiarity with him. The more you are acquainted with him, and know of his duties, the more arduous you will find them; and consequently you will be disposed to make every due allowance for his unavoidable deficiences. You will exercise towards him more charity and more sympathy.

He will value highly your respect and friendship. Indeed without these he can be neither happy nor useful. And it will not be enough that you simply respect and esteem him. This respect and esteem must, in some way, be manifested, so as to convince him of their reality. Of what use would the sun be to your fields and gardens, if its genial influences were not felt by them; if its rays were withheld, and its warmth did not visit the earth? Would plants flourish and fruits ripen amidst cold and darkness, because the obscured and distant sun is not devoid of light and heat? And as little would your minister be animated and consoled in the discharge of his duties by that respect and affection, which are not manifested, and of the certainty of which he is in doubt, perhaps in ignorance. I do not mean that he will desire pecuniary proofs of your esteem and affection. No;—he will value your regard and kind feelings more highly than your silver or gold; and he will be satisfied with almost any method of expressing them, whether it be that of a social visit or a friendly call, a kind word or a kind look.

You will be desirous that his visits among you should be frequent. But when you reflect that the whole society have claims upon his time and attentions, and call to mind the multiplicity of his other duties, you need not doubt his friendship for you, and you ought not to harbour a prejudice against him, if you do not see him in your families so often as you could wish. If you are persuaded that he has that

general regard for you all, which a clergyman ought to have for his people ; if he visits you in seasons of trial and affliction, when his services are particularly needed ; and at other times as often as he can, consistently with his more indispensable duties ; do not complain. Be not so selfish as to wish for more of his society, when it might be at the expense of his usefulness, and of the highest good of your community.

Be tender of his reputation ; and never suffer yourselves or others to speak evil of him, or cast reflections upon him as a minister, or as a man. I cannot believe that he will ever so far depart from duty as justly to forfeit your esteem and confidence. You will, I trust, always put the most favorable construction upon his conduct, view his imperfections with great lenity, and throw over them the broad mantle of christian charity, that charity which suffereth long, and is kind, and thinketh no evil.

If he should ever forfeit his ministerial character, we ask no favor for him. Dismiss him at once. And if you should ever so far forget your duty towards him as to neglect his instructions, or show indifference to them, to treat him with coldness, or to withdraw from him that respect and attention which are his due ; it would break down his ambition, and check the noblest aspirations of his soul. The sensibilities of his kind heart and generous nature could not long endure it. It would weigh upon his spirits. It would kill him. No ;—he would, with a

mingled feeling of grief and pity, I will not say break the tender ties which bind a faithful clergyman to a worthy people, for they will have been already broken;—he would leave you, and go among those who would better appreciate his merits, show him kindness, and rejoice in the light of his instructions. I do not say this from the least suspicion that you will ever treat him thus. No;—I firmly believe that you will faithfully and conscientiously discharge your duties to him; and will do all in your power to promote his usefulness and his happiness.

I am forcibly reminded that the place on which we stand is memorable in the ecclesiastical history of New-England, as the spot where the apostolic Eliot proclaimed the glad tidings of the gospel to the savages of the wilderness. The history of that faithful servant of Christ is instructive. And whilst your clergyman, by reflecting upon his virtues, his disinterested labors and his spirit of self-sacrifice; by calling to mind how often, along the banks of your river, and among your beautiful hills, he passed from cabin to cabin as a minister of consolation, and a herald of peace; that so much was he devoted to the cause of his Master, and the moral improvement of those rude children of the forest, that he often partook of their coarse fare, passed whole nights in their open habitations, and slept on the hard earth, regardless of cold and storms; while, I say, your clergyman will be excited to duty by the example of his worthy and far-famed predecessor, you may

be instructed, and reminded of your duties to him, by reflecting, that even savage bosoms were not insensible to kindness; that the parishioners of ELIOT, untutored as they were, gave frequent proofs of their sense of obligation; that they consulted his welfare, and daily performed towards him kind and friendly offices. The sight of those trees, which were planted by their affection around his humble dwelling, cannot, I should think, fail of teaching you a lesson of kindness to your minister.

Reflect, my friends, upon the interesting relation in which he now stands to you. Your offspring he will here consecrate to the Father of our spirits. Here he will break to you the bread of life, dispense the offers of salvation, and beseech you, in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God. In your prosperity, he will rejoice with you. And in adversity, he will be with you to impart his sympathy, and to raise your thoughts above the darkness that surrounds you. Yes;—when the tenderest relations of life are severed, when death has laid his cold hand on an object most dear to your souls, and there is a painful void in your bosoms which the world cannot fill;—in seasons like this, he will feel with you and for you. His voice will calm the troubled spirit, and console the broken heart. He will direct your views beyond the wastes of mortality and the ravages of the tomb, to a brighter, happier world, where all tears will be wiped away, where sorrow and death can never enter, and where friends will meet,

to part no more.—In the chamber of sickness, too, when your wasted strength and the countenances of your friends admonish you of your approaching dissolution, and the realities of eternity seem near; in that dark and trying hour, many of you will feel the friendly pressure of his hand, and see over you his anxious and affectionate countenance. He will then be with you to dispel your needless fears, to animate your christian hopes, to prepare you for the last conflicts of nature, and smooth your passage to the grave.—And over your lifeless forms, his prayers will ascend to the God of all grace and consolation, in behalf of the weeping friends you will leave behind you; and he will follow you as a mourner, yes, as a sincere mourner, to that narrow house appointed for all the living.

Is not he, let me ask, who sustains such intimate and interesting relations towards you; whose instructions will exert an influence over your present and your future condition; is not he entitled to your respect, your esteem, your kindness? He is. Be, then, to him a blessing, and he will be a richer blessing to you. Remember that nothing will so much rejoice his heart as to see you walking in the truth, cherishing the love of God, growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

APPENDIX.

JOHN ELIOT,

THE APOSTLE TO THE AMERICAN INDIANS.

'Not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles.'

It was thought that some account of the life and labors of the venerable Eliot, might not be uninteresting to the readers of the preceding Discourse. In compiling the following sketch, free use has been made of Mather's Magnalia, Neal's History of New-England, Gookin's Historical Collections of the Indians in New-England, Dr John Eliot's Historical Account, and the Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society. A. Y.

John Eliot, commonly called the *Apostle to the Indians*, exhibited more lively traits of an extraordinary character than we find in most ages of the church, or in most christian countries. He, who could prefer the American wilderness to the pleasant fields of Europe, was ready to wander through this wilderness for the sake of doing good. To be active was the delight of his soul; and he went to the hovels which could not keep out the wind and rain, where he labored incessantly among the Aborigines of America, though his popular talents gave him a distinction among the first divines of Massachusetts, at a time that the magistrates and all the people held the clergy in peculiar honor.

He was born in England, in 1604, and was educated at the University of Cambridge. 'He came to New-England' says Cotton Mather, 'in the month of November, 1631, among those blessed old Planters, who laid the foundations of a remarkable country, devoted unto the exercise of the Protestant religion, in

its purest and highest reformation. He listed himself among those valiant soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ, who cheerfully encountered first the perils of the Atlantic Ocean, and then the fatigues of the New-English wilderness, that they might have an undisturbed communion with him in his appointments here.'* He was settled as Teacher of the church in Roxbury, Nov. 5, 1632.

His labors, however, were not confined to his own people. Having imbibed the true spirit of the gospel, his heart was touched with the wretched condition of the Indians, and he became eagerly desirous of making them acquainted with the glad tidings of salvation. When he began his mission, there were about seventeen or twenty tribes within the limits of the English planters. But these tribes were not large, and hardly to be distinguished; for their manners, language and religion were the same. The first thing he did was to learn the Massachusetts language, so as to be able to preach to the natives without the medium of an interpreter. For this purpose an Indian, who could speak English, was taken into his family, and by conversing freely with him, he learned to speak it.

'Behold,' says Cotton Mather, 'new difficulties to be surmounted by our indefatigable Eliot! He hires a native to teach him this exotic language, and with a laborious care and skill reduces it into a Grammar, which afterwards he published. There is a letter or two of our alphabet which the Indians never had in theirs. But if their alphabet be short, I am sure the words composed of it are long enough to tire the patience of any scholar in the world. One would think they had been growing ever since Babel, unto the dimensions to which they are now extended. For instance, if my reader will count how many letters there are in this one word, *Nummatchekodtantamooonganunnonash*, when he has done, for his reward I'll tell him, it signifies no more in English than 'our lusts;' and if I were to translate 'our loves,' it must be nothing shorter than *Noowomantammooonkanunonnash*. Or, to give my reader a longer word than either of these, *Kum-*

*Mather's Magnalia, Book III. pp. 173, 175.

mogkodonattoottummoootiteaongannunnonash, is in English, 'our question.' But I pray, sir, count the letters! I know not what thoughts it will produce in my reader, when I inform him, that once finding that the demons in a possessed young woman, understood the Latin, Greek and Hebrew languages, my curiosity led me to make trial of this Indian language, and the demons did seem as if they did not understand it. This tedious language our Eliot quickly became a master of.'*

Having thus prepared himself for his work, he began to preach to the neighbouring Indians. The place where he commenced his labors, was Nonantum,† near Watertown mill, upon the south side of Charles river, about four or five miles from his own house. Thither he went on the 28th of October, 1646, accompanied by three others, having previously informed the natives of his desire to instruct them in the christian faith. The following is Eliot's own account of his first interview.

'A little before we came to their wigwams, five or six of the chief men of them met us with English salutations, bidding us much welcome. Leading us into the principal wigwam, belonging to Waaubon, we found many men, women and children gathered together from all quarters; having been exhorted thereto by Waaubon, their chief minister of justice among them. We began with prayer, which now was in English, we being not so far acquainted with the Indian language as to express our hearts therein before God or them. We hope to be able to do this ere long; the Indians desiring it that they also may know how to pray. When prayer was ended, it was an affecting and glorious spectacle, to see a company of perishing and forlorn outcasts diligently attending to the blessed word of salvation then delivered, and professing that they understood all that was taught them in their own tongue.

* Mather's Magnalia, Book III. p. 193.

† This place is supposed to be the hill at the north-east corner of Newton, on which Messrs. Haven's and Wiggin's houses now stand. See Homer's Hist. of Newton, in Mass. Hist. Collect. Vol. V. p. 256, and Moore's Memoirs of Eliot, p. 21. This last work is an interesting and valuable compilation. It contains more facts relative to the labors of Eliot, than can be found in any single publication.

For about an hour and a quarter the sermon was continued; wherein one * of our company ran through all the principal matters of religion; beginning first with a repetition of the ten commandments, and a brief explication of them; and so applying the whole unto the condition of the Indians then present with much affection. He then preached Jesus Christ to them; and explained to them who Christ was. He spake to them of the blessed state of those who believe in Christ and know him feelingly; and then urged them to repentance for several known sins wherein they live.

'Having thus, in a set discourse, familiarly opened the principal matters of salvation to them, we next proposed certain questions, to see what they would say to them; so that we might by a variety of means instruct them in the things of religion. But, before we did this, we asked them if they understood all that which was already spoken; and whether all of them in the wigwam did understand, or only some few. They answered to this question, with a multitude of voices, that they all of them understood all that which was spoken unto them. We then desired to know of them if they would propose any question to us for the more clear understanding of what was delivered. Whereupon several of them propounded presently several questions.

'These things were spoken by him who had preached to them, in their own language; borrowing, now and then, some small helps from the interpreter, whom we had brought with us, and who could oftentimes express our minds more distinctly than we could ourselves. But this we perceived, that a few words from the preacher were more regarded than many from the Indian interpreter.

'After three hours' time thus spent with them, we asked them if they were not weary, and they answered, No. But we resolved to leave them with an appetite. The chief of them seeing us conclude with prayer, desired to know when we would come again; so we appointed the time; and having given the children some apples, and the men some tobacco and what else we then had at

* Undoubtedly Mr Eliot himself.

hand, they desired some more ground to build a town on together; which we did much like of, promising to speak for them to the General Court, that they might possess all the compass of that hill upon which their wigwams then stood; and so we departed with many welcomes from them.'

On the 11th of November, they gave the Indians another meeting by appointment, and found a larger company met together than before. Mr Eliot began with the children, and after catechising them, preached about an hour to the whole company. They then spent several hours in answering questions proposed by the Indians. The following are Mr Eliot's own remarks on this interview.

'Thus I have, as faithfully as I could remember, given you a true account of our beginnings with the Indians within our bounds; which cannot but furnish matter of serious thought what further to do with these poor natives, the dregs of mankind, and the saddest spectacles of misery of mere men upon earth. We did think to forbear going to them this winter, but this last day's work, wherein God set his seal from heaven of acceptance of our little, makes those of us who are able, to resolve to adventure through frost and snow, lest the fire go out of their hearts for want of a little more fuel; to which we are the more encouraged, in that the next day after being with them, one of the Indians came to his house who preached to them to speak with him; who in private conference wept exceedingly, and said all that night the Indians could not sleep, partly with trouble of mind, and partly with wondering at the things which they heard preached among them; another Indian coming also to him the next day after, told him how many of the wicked Indians began to oppose these beginnings.

'Some hours having been thus passed with them, Mr. Eliot asked, "what do you remember of what was taught you since the last time we were there?" After they had spoken one to another for some time, one of them returned this answer, that they did much thank God for our coming, and for what they heard; they were wonderful things unto them.'*

* See Note, at the end of the Appendix.

On the 26th of the same month they met the Indians a third time; but the company was not so numerous as before, because the Powaws, or priests, had dissuaded some from coming to hear the English ministers, and deterred others by threatening them with death. Those that were present, however, appeared very serious, and seemed to be touched with Mr Eliot's sermon. Two or three days after this meeting, Wampas, a wise and grave Indian, with two of his companions, came to the English and brought his son and three other Indian children, begging that they might be educated in the christian faith. At the next meeting, which took place on the 9th of December, all that were present offered their children to be instructed by the English; who, therefore, resolved to set up a school among them. In May, 1647, the General Court of Massachusetts, at Mr Eliot's request, gave the Indians in that neighbourhood, some land to build a town upon, which they called *Noonatomen*, or *Noonanetum*, that is, *Rejoicing*.

While these things were doing at Noonatomen, the Indians about Concord expressed their desires of being civilized and receiving the christian faith; and begged Mr Eliot to come and preach to them. Within a short time, too, after his first attempt, he set up another lecture at a place called Neponsett, within the bounds of Dorchester, about four miles from his house southward. Mr. Eliot continued to preach these two lectures at Nonantum and Neponsett for several years with good success. *

But Mr Eliot's labours were not confined to one or two places. He travelled into all parts of the Massachusetts and Plymouth colonies, even as far as Cape Cod and Martha's Vineyard, offering to preach to as many of the sachems and their subjects as would hear him. 'Having entered upon the teaching of these poor creatures, it is incredible,' says Mather, 'how much time, toil, and hardship he underwent in the prosecution of this undertaking; how many weary days and nights rolled over him; how many tiresome journeys he endured; and how many terrible dangers he had experience of. If you briefly would know what he felt,

* Neal, Hist. N. Eng. I. 247. Mass. Hist. Coll. I. 169.

and what carried him through all, take it in his own words in a letter to the honorable Mr Winslow; "I have not been dry, night nor day, from the third day of the week unto the sixth, but so travelled, and at night pull off my boots, wring my stockings, and on with them again, and so continue. But God steps in and helps. I have considered the word of God in 2 Tim. ii. 3. Endure hardships as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." '*

He usually went once a fortnight on his evangelical mission, though he knew that several of the Indian princes and priests had often plotted his destruction, and would certainly have put him to the most tormenting death, if they had not been awed by the power and strength of the English colonies. They looked upon Mr Eliot as a man who designed to overturn their civil as well as religious policy. The prince was jealous of his prerogative, and the priest of his gain, and so both joined together to hinder the progress of the new doctrines. Innumerable were the affronts that he met with in his missionary work. Sometimes the sachems would thrust him out from among them, telling him that if he came again, it should be at his peril. But his usual reply was, 'I am about the work of the great God, and my God is with me; so that I fear neither you nor all the sachems in the country. I 'll go on, and do you touch me, if you dare!' †

'Notwithstanding all these discouragements, the christian religion began to obtain in several parts of the country. The new converts were distinguished by the name of the *Praying Indians*, who as soon as they had renounced their old religion, abandoned their wild and barbarous way of living. A considerable body of them combined together in the year 1651, and built a town by the side of Charles river, which they called Natick. It consists of three long streets, two on this side the river, and one on that, with house-lots to every family. There is one large house built after the English manner. The lower room is a large hall, which serves for a meeting-house on the Lord's day, and a school-house on the week-days. There is a large canopy of matts raised

* Mather's Magnalia, Book III. p. 196.

† Neal, I. 249, et sqq. Mather, Book III. 198.

upon poles for Mr Eliot and his company; and other sort of canopies for themselves and other hearers to sit under, the men and women being placed apart. The upper room is a kind of wardrobe, where the Indians hang up their skins, and other things of value. In a corner of this room Mr Eliot has an apartment partitioned off, with a bed and bedstead in it. There is likewise a handsome large fort, of a round figure, palisadoed with trees, and a foot-bridge over the river, in form of an arch, the foundation of which is secured with stone, with several little houses after the English fashion.' *

Eliot thus describes the building of the first Indian church at Natick. 'We must of necessity have a house to lodge and meet in, and wherein to lay our provisions and clothes, which cannot be in wigwams. I set the Indians, therefore, to fell and square timber; and when it was ready, I went and many of them with me, and on their shoulders carried all the timber together.'

The new converts continued several years under the character of catechumens, all which time they were visited by Mr Eliot or some other divine every week. At length the first Indian church was formed at Natick, in the year 1660. 'From this church and town of Natick,' says Gookin, 'have issued forth, as from a seminary of virtue and piety, divers teachers that are employed in several new praying towns.' †

But Mr Eliot's care of the new converts was not confined to his own personal instruction. He therefore took an ingenious In-

* Neal, I. 553. He quotes from a tract, entitled, '*Manifestation of the further progress of the gospel in N. E.*' See Note at the end of the Appendix.

† Hist. Coll. I. 183. The eccentric John Dunton, a London bookseller, who visited Boston on business, in the year 1685, gives a pleasant account of a journey he made to Natick. After visiting Mr Eliot at Roxbury, who presented him with twelve Indian bibles, he says, 'On my return I found several of my friends making ready for a journey to Natick. I was glad of the opportunity to acquaint myself with the manners, religion and government of the Indians. When we were setting forward, I was forced, out of civility and gratitude, to take madam Brick behind me on horseback. It is true she was the flower of Boston, but in this case proved no more than a beautiful sort of luggage to me.' Further particulars may be found in his Life and Errors, Vol. I. pp. 115—123, or Hist. Coll. II. 108—115.

dian, named Monequessun, into his house; and having taught him to read and write, made him schoolmaster at Natick. Some of the Indians, who had a genius for learning, were admitted into Harvard College, and had a liberal education bestowed upon them, whereby their congregations were quickly furnished with ministers of their own. *

It is no wonder after all this, that Mr Eliot was in high esteem among the new converts; that they consulted him as their oracle in all difficult cases; that they loved him as their very lives, and would run all hazards to serve him. He really deserved well of them, for no man ever took such true pains in the missionary work as himself; his name therefore will be mentioned with honor, as long as there is a christian Indian in the world.

Eliot certainly was the most successful missionary that ever preached the gospel to the Indians. His prudence and zeal, his patience, resolution, activity, and knowledge of mankind, were equally conspicuous. Many have done worthily in this benevolent work; but, if we unite an apt method of applying the truths of Christianity to the minds of the heathen, with the success of his labors, he far excelled them all. He likewise claims a very peculiar character, as being the first Protestant minister who diffused the beams of evangelical truth among the wild nations of this benighted part of the globe. The tribes that roamed through the deserts became dear to him, like his own people, and he often forsook the charms of civilized and cultivated society, to reside with men, who were not only unacquainted with every thing called urbanity, but who wanted comfortable means of subsistence; with whom he would associate days and weeks, to instruct them in divine things, and also acquaint them how they could improve their condition upon the earth. He partook with them their hard fare, with locks wet with the dews of the night, and exposed to attacks from the beasts of the forest.

* A brick building was erected at Cambridge for their use, and called the Indian College. Only one native took his degree. His name was Caleb Cheeshahteaumuck. He was graduated in 1665.

We come now to speak of that great and laborious undertaking, his Translation of the whole Bible into the Indian language. The New Testament was published Sept. 5, 1661, and dedicated to Charles II. The Old Testament was published in 1663. A second edition of the New Testament appeared in 1680, and of the Old in 1685.

'Behold, ye Americans,' exclaims Cotton Mather 'the greatest honor that ever you were partakers of! This Bible was printed here at our Cambridge; and it is the only Bible that ever was printed in all America, from the very foundation of the world. The whole translation he writ with but *one pen;* which pen, had it not been lost, would have certainly deserved a richer case than was bestowed upon that pen with which Holland writ his translation of Plutarch. The Bible being justly made the leader of all the rest, a little Indian library quickly followed; for, besides Primers and Grammars, and some other such composures, we had the "Practice of Piety" in the Indian tongue, and the Reverend Richard Baxter's "Call to the Unconverted." He also translated some of Mr Shepard's composures; and such catechisms likewise, as there was occasion for. It cannot but be hoped that some fish were to be made alive, since the waters of the sanctuary thus came unto them.'*

The completion of his Translation of the Bible, was a subject of deep interest to our venerable Evangelist, as may be seen from the following extracts from his letters to the celebrated Robert Boyle, Governor of the Corporation in England for propagating the gospel among the Indians.†

'Our praying Indians are numerous; thousands of souls beg, cry, entreat for Bibles.—The great work that I travel about is the printing of the Old Testament, that they may have the whole Bible. I desire to see it done before I die, and I am so deep in years, that I cannot expect to live long. I have added some part of my salary to keep up the work.—My age makes me importunate. I shall depart joyfully, may I but leave the Bible among

* Mather's Magnalia, Book III. 197.

† These letters are in the third volume of the Hist. Coll. pp. 177—188.

them.—I am deep in years, and sundry say, if I do not procure it printed while I live, it is not within the prospect of human reason, whether ever, or when, or how, it may be accomplished. The work goeth on, I praise God.—The Bible is come forth, many hundreds bound up, and dispensed to the Indians. I am old, ready to be gone, and desire to leave as many books as I can.'

In 1666, he published 'The Indian Grammar begun, or an essay to bring the Indian language into rules.' * At the end of this work, he says, 'I have now finished what I shall do at present; and in a word or two to satisfy the prudent inquirer how I found out these new ways of grammar, which no other learned language (so far as I know) useth; I thus inform him. God first put into my heart a compassion over their poor souls, and a desire to teach them to know Christ, and to bring them into his kingdom. Then presently I found out (by God's wise providence) a pregnant-witted young man, who had been a servant in an English house, who pretty well understood his own language, and hath a clear pronunciation; him I made my interpreter. By his help I translated the commandments, the Lord's prayer, and many texts of scripture. Also I compiled both exhortations and prayers by his help. I diligently marked the difference of their grammar from ours; when I found the way of them, I would pursue a word, a noun, a verb, through all variations I could think of. And thus I came at it. We must not sit still and look for miracles. Up, and be doing, and the Lord will be with thee. Prayer and pains, through faith in Christ Jesus, will do any thing. *Nil tam difficile quod non*—I do believe and hope that the gospel shall be spread to all the ends of the earth, and dark corners of the world, by such a way, and by such instruments as the churches shall send forth for that end and purpose. Lord, hasten those good days, and pour out that good spirit upon thy people. Amen.' †

* This has been republished with Introductory Observations by John Pickering, Notes and Observations by Peter S. Duponceau, and Supplementary Observations by Mr. Pickering, in Hist. Coll. Vol. IX. 2d series, p. 223.

† Hist. Coll. IX. 312, second series.

We sometimes hear the inquiry made as to the correctness and value of Eliot's Grammar and Translation of the Bible. The best answer to this inquiry may be found in the words of one of the very few who are competent to form an opinion on the subject—the celebrated philologist, Duponceau :—

'This great and good man [Eliot] did not foresee, when he wrote his Indian Grammar, that it would be sought after and studied by the learned of all nations. The Augustine of New England had no object in view, but that which he expresses in his title page—'the help of such as desired to learn the Indian language for the furtherance of the gospel among the natives.' But that worldly fame, which he did not seek, awaited him at the end of two centuries; and his works, though devoted to religion alone, have become important sources of human learning.

'This Translation of the Bible by our venerable Eliot is a rich and valuable mine of Indian philology. A complete grammar and dictionary might, with labour and perseverance, be extracted from it; for there is hardly a mode or figure of speech, which is not to be found somewhere in the sacred writings. It has been of great use to me in the investigation of the character and structure of the American languages, and I hope to derive still further benefit from it. Every copy of it, that is yet extant, ought to be preserved with the greatest care, as it is hardly to be hoped that it will ever be entirely reprinted.'*

Another eminent linguist, Mr. Pickering, says, 'The Indian Grammar of this indefatigable man possesses great merit in many respects.'

'His way of preaching,' says Mather, 'was very plain; so that the very lambs might wade into his discourses on those texts and themes wherein elephants might swim.'†

'He that will write of Eliot,' says Mather, 'must write of charity, or say nothing.' He gave largely from his own income to the poor, and promoted all kinds of useful distributions, especially if he

* Notes on Eliot's Indian Grammar, in Hist. Coll. IX. second series.

† Mather's Magnalia, Book III. 185.

could serve the cause of religion. When his age unfitted him for public employment, he reflected that he did good as he had opportunity. 'Alas!' said he, 'I have lost every thing. My understanding leaves me, my memory fails me, my utterance fails me, but I thank God my charity holds out still.' So great was his charity, that his salary was often distributed for the relief of his needy neighbours, so soon after the period at which he received it, that, before another period arrived, his own family were straitened for the comforts of life. One day the parish treasurer, on paying the money for salary due, which he put into a handkerchief, in order to prevent Mr Eliot from giving away his money before he got home, tied the ends of the handkerchief in as many hard knots as he could. The good man received his handkerchief, and took leave of the treasurer. He immediately went to the house of a sick and necessitous family. On entering, he gave them his blessing, and told them God had sent them some relief. The sufferers, with tears of gratitude, welcomed their pious benefactor, who, with moistened eyes, began to untie the knots in his handkerchief. After many efforts to get at his money, and impatient at the perplexity and delay, he gave the handkerchief and all the money to the mother of the family, saying, with a trembling accent, 'Here, my dear, take it; I believe the Lord designs it all for you.'*

Eliot died in the year 1690, at the advanced age of 86. Few of his family were alive to lament his death; but he was lamented by the whole family of virtue, and by all the sincere friends of religion. The poor church at Natick not only joined with those who dropped a tear upon his dust, but streams of sorrow flowed from the heart. Though he lived many years, they were filled with usefulness; succeeding generations mentioned his name with uncommon respect; his labors were applauded in Europe and America; and all who now contemplate his active services, his benevolent zeal, his prudence, his upright conduct, his charity, are ready to declare his memory precious. Such a man will be handed down to future times, an object of admiration and love; and appear conspicuous in the historic page when distant ages celebrate the worthies of New-England.

* Hist. Coll. X. 186.

'If the dust of dead saints,' says Mather, 'could give us any protection, we are not without it. Here is a spot of American soil, that will afford a rich crop of it at the resurrection of the just. Poor New-England has been, as Glastenbury of old was called, a burying-place of saints. But we cannot see a more terrible prognostic than tombs filling apace with such bones as those of the renowned Eliot's. The whole building of this country trembles at the fall of such a pillar.' *

The famous Richard Baxter, in a letter to Increase Mather, says, 'I knew much of Mr. Eliot's opinions by many letters which I had from him. There was no man on earth whom I honored above him. It is his evangelical work that is the apostolical succession that I plead for.' †

The Indian town of Natick was formed in 1651. A church was gathered in 1660. It was incorporated into an English district, in 1761, and into a town, in 1781. After Mr Eliot's death, the Indian church dwindled away. The Rev. Mr Gookin, of Sherburne, son of Gen. Gookin, however, bestowed his pious cares upon it. In 1674, the teachers were Anthony and John Speen, grave and pious men. The pastor of the church in 1687 was an Indian, named Daniel. In 1721, Mr Peabody went to Natick as a missionary. He was ordained Oct. 21, 1729. A church was gathered, partly of Indians and partly of English. When he went there, thirty one years after the death of Eliot, he could find no records or traces of any thing referring to the former church. He labored 29 years, and died Feb. 2, 1752. Mr Badger was ordained March 27, 1753. He was in the ministry 46 years. He closed his public services July, 1799, and died Aug. 23, 1803.‡ After Mr Badger's death, the Indians had become so few in number that no provision was made for their particular instruction. Rev. Freeman Sears was ordained as minister of the town of

* Mather's Magnalia, Book III. 208. † Ibid. 210.

‡ A letter written by Mr Badger concerning the Indians, may be found in the Hist. Coll. V. 32.

Natick, Jan. 1, 1806. He died June 30, 1811. Rev. Martin Moore was ordained his successor, Feb. 16, 1814.*

The church of the 'South Congregational Society' is the fourth that has been erected on this hallowed spot. It was dedicated Nov. 20, 1828. The Dedication Sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr Lowell, of Boston, from Haggai, ii. 9. '*In this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts.*' As this is now a distinct parish, it has been suggested, that to commemorate the name of the Apostle to the Indians, it should be called *Eliot*, or *Eliotville*.

* Hist. Coll, I. 184. Mather, III. 194. VI. 61. Moore's Memoirs of Eliot, p. 122.

NOTE.

The accounts which Eliot gives of his first interviews with the Indians, are contained in letters which he wrote home to his friends in England, and which were there collected, and from time to time published in the form of pamphlets. The interest excited by these publications, led, in 1649, to the establishment and incorporation of the 'Society for the propagation of the gospel in New-England and the parts adjacent.'

These tracts are now very rare, at least in this country. Neal, in his History of New-England, makes great use of them; but none of the subsequent writers on the subject appear to have seen them. We know of but one copy; which belongs to the Library of the American Antiquarian Society, in Worcester. The regulations of that Society forbid the removal of any book from the Library. Being thus debarred from all access to the originals, we have been obliged to make our extracts at third-hand, from Moore's Memoirs of Eliot, who copied them from the London Missionary Register.

The Librarian of the American Antiquarian Society, has, at our request, obligingly favored us with a description of these tracts, and their titles. They are all in the quarto form, closely printed, and are bound in one volume. They are made up principally of letters written by Eliot. There are some among them from the Rev. Thomas Mayhew, and a few from the Rev. John Wilson. The following are the titles of the pamphlets:—

(1.) New-England's First Fruits; in the conversion of some, conviction of divers, preparation of sundry, of the Indians; of the progress of learning in the College at Cambridge in Massachusetts Bay; with divers special matters concerning the country. London. 1643. pp. 26. [A part of this tract has been republished in the Hist. Coll. Vol. I. p. 242.]

(2.) Good News from New-England. London. 1648. pp. 25. [This tract was written by Edward Winslow. The only other copy of it that we know of, is among the treasures of the Ebeling Collection in the Library of Harvard College. An abridgment of it is contained in the fifth volume of Purchas's Pil-

grims. The '*disjecta membra*' of this interesting document may be seen in the Hist. Coll. VIII. 239—76, and IX. 74—105, 2d series. The tract was first published in 1624.]

(3.) Of the conversion of five thousand, and nine hundred East Indians; with a postscript of the gospel's good success among the West Indians in New-England. London. 1650. pp. 40. [The Postscript contains,—i. Good news of the day breaking—ii. Of the clear sunshine—iii. Of the glorious progress of the gospel breaking forth upon many West Indians in New-England. These three chapters are nothing more than abridgments of the three next pamphlets, and are made up mostly of extracts from the letters of Eliot.]

(4.) The day-breaking, if not the sun-rising of the gospel with the Indians in New-England. London. 1647. pp. 25. [This tract was written by the Rev. John Wilson.]

(5.) The clear sunshine of the gospel breaking forth upon the Indians of New-England. London. 1648. pp. 38. [This was written by the Rev. Thomas Shepard, of Cambridge.]

(6.) The glorious progress of the gospel amongst the Indians of New-England, manifested by three letters from the Rev. John Eliot and the Rev. Thomas Mayhew; with an appendix by J. D., minister of the gospel. London. 1649. pp. 28. [This tract was published by Edward Winslow.]

(7.) The light appearing more and more towards the perfect day; or a further discovery of the present state of the Indians in New-England, concerning the progress of the gospel among them; manifested by letters from such as preached to them there. By Henry Whitfield, late pastor of the church in Guildford, in New-England. London. 1651. pp. 46. [This tract is made up of letters from Eliot and Mayhew; chiefly from Eliot.]

(8.) Strength unto Weakness; or a glorious manifestation of the further progress of the gospel amongst the Indians in New-England, held forth in sundry letters from divers ministers and others to the Corporation established by Parliament for the promotion of the gospel among the heathen in New-England. London. 1652. pp. 40. [This consists chiefly of letters from Eliot.]

(9.) Tears of Repentance; or a further narrative of the progress of the gospel amongst the Indians in New-England. London. 1653. pp. 47. [This is the largest tract in the volume. It appears to have been furnished by Eliot and Mayhew, and published under the direction of the Corporation. A large proportion of it is made up of the confessions of the converted Indians, reported with great minuteness.]

(10.) A late further manifestation of the progress of the gospel amongst the Indians in New-England. London. 1655. pp. 23. [This was written by Eliot, and published by the Corporation.]

These Indian tracts are too valuable to remain in obscurity. The Society, in whose keeping they now are, could publish nothing in their second volume more useful and interesting. If that volume is not to be soon forthcoming, cannot the Massachusetts Historical Society add this to the other treasures of their invaluable Collections?

The chapter of Neal's History of New-England, on the 'Conversion of the Indians,' is particularly valuable, as it was compiled from the documents just mentioned, and from the memoirs and letters of Eliot, Mayhew, and other missionaries, to the Society for propagating the gospel. Where these were deficient, he tells us, he had the kind assistance of the Society itself. Having access to such materials, it is not surprising that he records many facts not to be found elsewhere. The assertion of Hutchinson, that Neal's History 'is little more than an abridgment of Mather,' is certainly not true of the chapter on the Indians.

His spirit heard the toil-earned praise,
'Thou servant of the Lord, well done!'

O, may his sacred mantle be
To him, our chosen shepherd, given,
His ardent, humble piety,
His zeal, to guide his flock to heaven.

PRAYER OF ORDINATION,

BY THE REV. DR LOWELL, OF BOSTON.

CHARGE,

BY THE REV. MR THOMPSON, OF BARRE.

RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP,

BY THE REV. MR HAMILTON, OF TAUNTON.

ORIGINAL HYMN,

WRITTEN BY WILLIAM BIGLOW, OF NATICK.

With prayer devout and fervent,
O God, our heavenly King,
Thy consecrated servant
To Thee we humbly bring.
To vanquish sin and error
May he with power arise,
With gospel love and terror,
And none his youth despise.

To him, through grace to inherit,
Be a rich portion given
Of the Redeemer's spirit,
A foretaste pure of heaven.

This spirit, in him growing,
Lord, aid him to impart,
With fervour bright and glowing,
To every hearer's heart.

Prepare our hearts, O Father,
This spirit to receive ;
Let no bad passions gather,
To quench it, or to grieve.
Long, long, a faithful Pastor,
May he thy flock supply,
Ere his approving Master
Shall welcome him on high.

To God all wise, all glorious,
His first born Son who gave,
And to the Lamb victorious
O'er Satan and the grave,
Be worship due ascending
From heirs of love and grace,
Through ages never ending,
And boundless realms of space.

ADDRESS TO THE SOCIETY,

BY THE REV. MR BRIGGS, OF LEXINGTON.

CONCLUDING PRAYER,

BY THE REV. BERNARD WHITMAN, OF WALTHAM.

ANTHEM.

BENEDICTION,

BY THE REV. JAMES W. THOMPSON.

ORDER OF EXERCISES.

ANTHEM.

INTRODUCTORY PRAYER,

BY THE REV. MR SANGER, OF DOVER.

SELECTIONS FROM THE SCRIPTURES,

BY THE REV. MR SIBLEY, OF STOW.

ORIGINAL HYMN,

WRITTEN BY WILLIAM BIGLOW, OF NATICK.

'Let there be light,' Jehovah said,
And light from chaos sprung;
And morning stars, and sons of God
Loud alleluiahs sung.

'Let there be light'—man disobeyed,
And mercy's light was shed;
The Son of Man in promise rose
To bruise the serpent's head.

On Abraham light prophetic shone,
And warmed his faithful breast;
He saw the day of Christ, in whom
All nations shall be blest.

A host of holy seers beheld
The day-spring from on high,
Bright harbinger of perfect light,
Dawn in the distant sky.

At length the Sun of Righteousness
Dispelled remaining gloom ;
Full, never-ending day appeared
Beyond the darksome tomb.

O, for a beam of heavenly light,
To fill this holy house,
While Christians and their Pastor pledge
Their mutual, solemn vows.

SERMON,

BY THE REV. MR YOUNG, OF BOSTON.

HYMN,

WRITTEN BY JOSIAH BIGLOW, OF NATICK.

Here first, O Lord, the red men woke
Their wild, untutored song to Thee ;
Their altar was the forest oak,
Their temple, heaven's high canopy.

And where the hearth, with cheerful blaze,
Welcomes a more enlightened throng,
The desert heard their simple praise,
And echoed back their grateful song.

O, where is now that gathering band,
That met in olden time to pray ?
And where that holy man, whose hand
First led them on their pilgrim way ?

Peaceful they slumber, side by side,
Where they thy holy name avowed ;
The warrior's plume, the chieftain's pride,
Before a stranger-race are bowed.

Rich in the fulness of his days,
That veteran of the cross is gone ;

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